



State of New Hampshire

Department of Resources & Economic Development

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Office of Workforce Opportunity

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

State Workforce Plan Development

RFP # 01-15 - DRED/OWO/WIOA

Release Date: May 5, 2015

Due Date: June 1, 2015

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Section I: Purpose

The Department of Resources and Economic Development, Office of Workforce Opportunity (DRED/OWO) is soliciting a Request for Proposal (RFP) on behalf of the State Workforce Investment Board (Board). The purpose of the RFP is to identify individuals and/or entities experienced in strategic planning to support the development of a four-year comprehensive workforce strategic plan for the State of New Hampshire in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The proposed services will be funded under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 that amends the Workforce Investment Act, P.L.105-220, 20 USC 9201.

Section II: Background

The New Hampshire Department of Resources & Economic Development, Office of Workforce Opportunity [hereinafter referred to as DRED/OWO] is the State Agency designated by the Governor of New Hampshire to serve as the grant recipient for all federal funds allocated through the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) and its amendments, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. To learn more about DRED visit www.dred.state.nh.us.

The State Workforce Board [hereinafter referred to as the Board] in New Hampshire operates as a single service delivery area, and as such has one state level Board; there are not any local workforce innovation boards. Consistent with WIOA requirements the Board is composed of business leaders from throughout the state, representatives of organized labor, and state agency leaders. Private sector leaders constitute a majority of the membership. The mission of the board is to promote life-long learning by partnering with businesses, agencies, and organizations to bring the state's education, employment and training programs together into a workforce development system that provides the means for residents of New Hampshire to gain sufficient skills, education, employment and financial independence. To learn more about the Board visit www.nhworks.org.

The NH Works One-Stop Operator Consortium (Consortium) serves as the One-Stop Operator in New Hampshire. The purpose of the Consortium is to oversee the implementation of system-wide workforce development strategies and goals at the service delivery level consistent with the vision and goals set forth by the Board. The Consortium is the primary committee charged with designing and implementing continuous improvement tools and processes for the one-stop delivery system. The Chair of the State Board serves as the Chair of the NH Works Consortium. Consortium membership is comprised of Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, State Director and/or other executive level staff from the core state-level workforce development system partners (i.e., NH Employment Security (NHES), NH Department of Education (DOE), NH Community College System (CCSNH), NH Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED/OWO), NH Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Community Action Association. The NH Works Consortium is a standing committee of the Board. For more information on the NH Works One-Stop service delivery system please see the current NH WIA/Wagner Peyser State plan at www.nhworks.org.

The Interagency Directors Group (IDG) is the Director level management team established to work in collaboration with the NH Works One-Stop Operator Consortium. Comprised of staff from each of the primary partners, the IDG functions as a strategic mechanism to facilitate communication among partner agencies and identify issues relevant to system-wide operations of the NH Works Centers. The team identifies new or emerging issues that affect the work of the NH Works center operations on a system level, and reports to the NH Works Consortium with recommendations for change and/or continuous improvement as appropriate. Collectively the IDG represents the six required WIOA programs for the unified plan (i.e., WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth; Employment Service, Adult Basic Education and Vocational Rehabilitation). Additional members include the TANF agency, community college system and state apprenticeship staff.

In accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, the Governor of each State must submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the Secretary of DOL that outlines a 4-year strategy for the State's workforce development system. States must have approved State Plans in place to receive funding for the six core programs under WIOA – the

adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs (title I of WIOA); the AEFLA program (title II of WIOA); the Wagner-Peyser Act employment services program (title III of WIOA); and the Vocational Rehabilitation program under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (title IV of WIOA).

The major content areas of the Unified or Combined State Plan include strategic and operational planning elements. Strategic planning elements include State analyses of economic and workforce factors, an assessment of workforce development activities, formulation of the State's vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce that meets the needs of employers, and a strategy to achieve the vision and goals. Operational planning elements include State strategy implementation, State operating systems and policies, program-specific requirements, assurances, and additional requirements imposed by the Secretaries of Labor or Education, or other Secretaries, as appropriate.

The plan requirements also require the use of economic and labor market information to ensure that the Governor's vision and the State's strategies are based on a thorough understanding of the economic opportunities and workforce needs of the State. This will align the best interests of job seekers and employers with the economic future of the State.

State Workforce Development Boards are responsible for the development, implementation, and modification of the plan, and for convening of all relevant programs, required partners, and stakeholders. The Governor must ensure that the Unified or Combined State Plan is developed in a transparent manner and in consultation with representatives of businesses, representatives of labor organizations, community-based organizations (CBOs), adult and youth education and workforce development providers, institutions of higher education, disability service entities, youth-serving programs, and other stakeholders with an interest in the services provided by the six core programs and any optional program included in a Combined Plan, as well as the general public, including individuals with disabilities.

Section III: Statement of Work

The Office of Workforce Opportunity is seeking proposals from individuals and/or entities [hereinafter referred to as the Contractor] experienced in strategic planning to support the development of a four- year comprehensive workforce strategic plan for the State of New Hampshire. The Contractor will work with the Board and across partner agencies with designated staff to develop a statewide workforce plan that at a minimum complies with the requirements of the WIOA. The Contractor will provide facilitation, planning and technical support both to conduct a statewide strategic planning process and to complete a four year plan that documents the plan process and outcomes. The plan must include the strategic and operational planning elements as described in the Federal Register / Vol. 80, No. 73 / Thursday, April 16, 2015 / Proposed Rules - Subpart H (<http://federalregister.gov/a/2015-05528>) and the ensuing final regulations. It is anticipated that the State will develop a combined plan that includes the six required programs plus only those other programs currently included in our State plan; however the option to move to a combined plan that includes other programs shall remain open throughout the planning process to ensure the inclusion of programs identified by the planning committees as strategically necessary for inclusion in the state's plan.

The Contractor will be responsible for conducting the following activities and/or deliverables:

WIOA Plan Stakeholder Engagement

Working with the IDG, the Contractor will help design a multifaceted approach to ensure broad stakeholder (e.g., Board members, partner agencies, community based organizations, advocacy groups serving targeted populations, the general public, etc.) engagement in the development of the Plan. The engagement strategy should deploy a variety of ways to efficiently convene stakeholders to encourage and receive input, including in person interviews, surveys, focus groups, social media, etc. The Contractor will be responsible for tracking, documenting and analyzing feedback from stakeholders for the purpose of informing the state planning process.

Facilitate Board Committee, Partner Agency and Stakeholder Meetings

The Contractor will work with staff and Board members to define respective roles and responsibilities for plan input, design, development, and implementation. Furthermore, the Contractor shall be responsible for assisting in the development of meeting agenda and outcomes to carry out planned activities. The Contractor shall facilitate the discussion among meeting participants to obtain input, resolve differences and keep the process moving forward. In addition, the Contractor shall ensure notes and records are maintained from each meeting, as well as ensure the continuity of discussion from meeting to meeting, with subsequent sessions building on the work of preceding meetings. The contractor should propose the minimum number of facilitated sessions recommended to achieve desired outcomes based on the contractors experience with similar projects of similar size. The contractor may assume that most meetings will be held in Concord, NH. A chart of the current committee structure is attached for reference purposes. In addition, the selected contractor must be available to attend the quarterly Board meetings on September 16th and December 16th to review plan details.

Review Existing Plans, Supporting Data and Related Documents

The Contractor will review existing required partner plans and other key stakeholder plans/efforts as determined necessary and make recommendations about how this work will complement, influence and align with the new State plan process and outcomes. Contractor shall provide technical assistance services to the Board to ensure alignment of local and regional efforts.

Strategic Plan Development

Based on what is learned from existing documents, best practice research, local and regional data, and community engagement, the Contractor will work with staff and Board members to develop a Plan document. The Contractor will document the process and results and submit a completed plan to the State Board for adoption. The final Plan is slated for completion in

February 2016 for submittal to US DOL by no later than March 3, 2016, for a July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2020 implementation period.

Section IV: Proposal Requirements

Contract Officer

This RFP is issued by DRED/OWO. The Contract Officer is the sole point of contact from the date of RFP release until the selection of the successful Contractor(s). All questions and requests for clarification should be submitted in writing to the Contract Officer, Jacqueline Heuser at Jacqueline.Heuser@dred.nh.gov

Procurement Timetable

| RFP Activity | Date | Time |
|---|------------------|-------------|
| Request for Proposals Issued | May 4, 2015 | |
| Written Responses to Questions | End May 22, 2015 | 2:00 PM EST |
| Closing date for Receipt of Proposals | June 1, 2015 | 4:00 PM EST |
| Contractor Selection (WIB approval) | June 15, 2015 | |
| Contract Negotiation Complete | June 17, 2015 | Estimate |
| Execute Contract | June 19, 2015 | Estimate |
| Initiate Review of Contract by Attorney General | June 29, 2015 | Estimate |
| Initiate Administrative Services Review | July 13, 2015 | Estimate |
| Governor and Executive Council Meeting | July (TBD) 2015 | Estimate |

1 DRED/OWO reserves the right to adjust these dates. The primary consideration in adjustment of dates shall be to ensure the earliest possible Governor and Executive Council approval of a contract awarded as a result of this RFP.

RFP Inquiries, Questions and Answers

The primary mode of communication between the DRED/OWO and potential bidders will occur via email. A written response to all questions will be sent to all known bidders. All questions regarding the RFP must be in writing and received prior to May 20, 2015. Questions received

after 2:00 pm of May 20, 2015 will not be answered. Questions must be sent to Jacqueline.Heuser@dred.nh.gov.

Cost of Proposal Preparation

The entire cost for the preparation of a proposal, and the attendance at any oral presentation or key personnel interviews requested by the RFP evaluation committee shall be borne solely by the Contractor.

Submission of Proposals

All proposals must be received via email by 4:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on June 1, 2015. Proposals not received by this time will be automatically disqualified from competition. Please send a complete proposal to Jacqueline.Heuser@dred.nh.gov.

All proposals, whether rejected or accepted, become the property of the State of New Hampshire, Department of Resources & Economic Development.

Proposal Content

All proposals must contain the following elements to be considered by the Evaluation Committee:

- Cover letter identifying the independent contractor or agency, with contact information, indication of legal capacity to do business in the State of New Hampshire and signed by a staff person authorized to represent the organization.
(Pass/fail – not more than 1 page)
- Describe your experience conducting similar work. Include 3 client references.
(Maximum 20 points – not more than 2 pages)

- Proposal describing your strategy and methods for designing, facilitating and completing the planning process and products.
(Maximum 35 points – not more than 3 pages)
- Timeline for delivering the Plan and specific milestones.
(Maximum 15 points – not more than 2 pages)
- Individual resume or summary of qualifications for the key person or persons to be assigned to this project, addressing their abilities to perform the required work.
(Maximum 10 points – not more than 5 pages)
- Bid amount and budget, including justification of all necessary costs, including hours of effort, rates, disbursements, overhead, travel and proposed reimbursement schedule
(Maximum 20 points – not more than 2 pages)

12-point Times New Roman type, 1-inch margins and 1.5 spacing is required.

DRED/OWO cannot enter into contract negotiations with an organization that is not legally permitted to conduct business within the State of New Hampshire or debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency.

Withdrawals

A submitted application may be withdrawn prior to the application due date. A written request to withdraw the application must be submitted to the Contract Officer. If a bidder does not withdraw a proposal by the due date, the proposal becomes the property of DRED/OWO and may be subject to public disclosure according to the state disclosure policies.

Section V: Evaluation Process

The IDG will serve as the RFP Evaluation Committee. The Evaluation Committee will conduct a comprehensive, fair, and impartial evaluation of proposals received in response to this RFP. The Evaluation Committee reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

Proposals will be screened for compliance with the specifications of this RFP through the following three-phase process.

- PHASE I DRED/OWO staff will initially evaluate each proposal for acceptability, with emphasis placed on completeness and responsiveness to requisite program criteria. The following minimum criteria will be used to determine which proposals will continue on to Phase II:
- The proposal was submitted in accordance with the specified timeline.
 - All requested information and documentation is included in the application package, and is complete and signed by the individual legally authorized to act on behalf of the bidder.
- PHASE II: Proposals that meet the minimum criteria stated above, will be reviewed and ranked by the RFP Evaluation Committee. Proposals will be ranked based on Proposal Evaluation Criteria outlined in the section below. These rankings will be used as a guide for discussion and determination of recommendations.
- PHASE III: The Contractor proposal recommended by the Evaluation Committee for selection will be reviewed with the NH Works Consortium and State Workforce Innovation Board for final approval.

The Evaluation Committee retains the right to request additional information from any applicant or request oral presentations from applicants.

If no response adequately addresses the services and outcomes requested, the committee may recommend that no award be made. Conversely, if only one response is received and that response is deemed adequate the committee may move that proposal forward for selection.

All contract awards will be considered provisional pending receipt of any additional documentation regarding administrative qualifications and/or any other areas of concern and the successful completion of contract negotiations. The final contract must be approved by the NH Governor and Council prior to enactment.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

The Evaluation Committee will evaluate each submitted proposal based on the following:

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Cover Letter | Pass/Fail |
| Experience Same/Similar Work (three references from similar clients) | 20 Points |
| Planning Process – Strategy and Methods | 35 Points |
| Timeline for Plan Development/Milestones | 15 Points |
| Key Personnel Qualifications | 10 Points |
| Bid Amount and Budget | 20 Points |

The maximum number of points available is 100 points. All sections are required to be complete. Refusal to complete any section to the satisfaction of the Evaluation Committee will eliminate the proposer from the competition.

Appeals and Disputes

A bidder who wishes to contest the award of funding under this RFP must submit a written letter stating the specifics of the dispute to the Contract Officer for this RFP by no later than June 18, 2015. DRED/OWO will issue a decision on appeals within 30 days of receipt. DRED/OWO encourages the use of informal resolution to address complaints or disputes related to RFP process. Written complaints should be addressed to the Office of Workforce Opportunity, 172 Pembroke Road, Concord, NH 03302.

Contract Award

The evaluation by the RFP Evaluation Committee will result in the selection of one or more proposals that are most advantageous to DRED/OWO. After analysis, evaluation and validation of Contractor responses, the successful Contractor will be notified in writing by DRED/OWO.

The selected Contractor may be required by DRED/OWO to participate in contract negotiations and to submit such price or other revisions to its proposal as may result from negotiations.

Upon resolution of the final negotiations, the OWO Director will notify the selected Contractor and will execute the contract subject to the final approval of the Governor and Executive Council of the State of New Hampshire.

DRED/OWO reserves the right to amend or scale down the requirements delineated in this RFP or to not award the bid. In the event this occurs prior to selection of the successful Contractor, all Contractors not previously excluded from ongoing participation in this bidding process due to technical difficulties shall be notified of such amendment(s). Additionally, an opportunity for Contractors to amend their bids will be given if such amendment(s) present a reasonable likelihood that amendments to bids would be needed for Contractors to effectively respond to the RFP.

Any contract resulting from this RFP shall comply with the formatting requirement of DRED/OWO and shall include all of the terms contained in the State's standard contract form (Form P-37) and supporting documents. The contract shall be effective only upon approval of the Governor and Executive Council.